Making good friends

Friendships have a huge impact on your mental health and happiness. Good friends relieve stress, provide comfort and joy, and can stop us from feeling lonely. Developing close friendships can also have a powerful impact on your physical health. But close friendships don't just happen. Many of us struggle to meet people and develop quality connections. Whatever your age, though, it's never too late to make new friends, reconnect with old ones, and greatly improve your social life, emotional health, and overall well-being.

What are the impacts of having healthy friendships?

- **Improve your mood.** Spending time with happy and positive friends can improve your mood and make the world seem like a happier place.
- **Help you to reach your goals.** Whether you're trying to get fit, improve your maths, or otherwise improve your life, encouragement from a friend can really increase your chances of success.
- **Reduce your stress and depression.** Having an active social life can strengthen your immune system and help reduce isolation *(feeling alone)*, a major contributing factor to depression.
- **Support you through tough times.** Even if it's just having someone to share your problems with, friends can help you cope with serious illness, the loss of a job or loved one, the breakup of a relationship, or any other challenges in life.
- **Boost your self-worth.** Friendship is a two-way street, and the "give" side of the give-and- take contributes to your own sense of self-worth. Being there for your friends makes you feel needed and adds purpose to your life.